



Preparing for interviews

Prior to the interview (#priortotheinterview)

In the interview (#intheinterview)

Interview questions and answers (#interviewquestionsandanswers)

At the end of the interview (#attheendoftheinterview)

Whether your interview is face-to-face, over the 'phone or by webcam the employer is interviewing you because you submitted a good application and are a strong applicant 'on paper'. It is crucial that you prepare well for your interview, not least because doing so will help with your (inevitable and expected) nerves. Expect questions that probe:

Your ability to do the job

Your motivation for the role and sector

Your interest in working for the organisation

Your 'fit' with the team and organisation

It is also crucial that you know what type of interview you are being invited to. For example, is it:

By telephone; Skype or face-to-face?

With one interviewer or a panel of people?

Structured around behavioural/competency

Part of an assessment centre?

-based questions?

Likely to include academic or technical questions?

Take a look at:

- **More Tips and Advice**

- [Job Hunting in Tough Times](#)

- [Tips and Advice](#)



- [Advice By Career](#) [Make the most of an Internship](#)

- [More Career Overviews](#) [Tips and Advice](#)

With thanks to [CareerPlayer \(http://www.careerplayer.com/\)](http://www.careerplayer.com/), Graduate Jobs and Career Advice on video.

Prior to the interview

Do your research – find out what you can about the organisation; the sector that it is in; major challenges and opportunities that both have; the type of interview that they are offering you and, where possible, who will be conducting it (e.g. their names and roles).

Re-read your application and any information that you have on the job. Anything that you've already told them can be asked about.

Consider the evidence you'll use to show that you have the skills and qualities that they're seeking – ensuring that you have more examples than those used in your application.

Consider what you want them to remember about you when the interview is over – based on what you can offer that distinguishes you from the other interviewees.

Ensure that you have professional; clean and neat interview attire ready and for face-to-face interviews plan your journey.

[Seminar on preparing for job interviews \(#interviews\)](#)

In the interview

First impressions count, and at face-to-face interviews these impressions start forming from the moment you arrive. Be friendly to everyone you meet and be aware that your body language and tone of voice will be being assessed. It is crucial that you:

- Introduce yourself clearly;
- Make eye contact and smile;
- Use a firm handshake;
- Walk tall and sit upright;
- Breathe!
- Keep an open posture;

- Be aware of any mannerisms; that you have;
- Look interested throughout.



Interview questions and answers

Most interviews will involve a combination of general and behavioural/competency-based questions. The former could include 'tell me about yourself?' or 'what are your strengths and weaknesses?' The latter explore your skills and experience; are open-ended and ask for examples of occasions when you have shown certain skills or behaviours.

Research the competencies that the role requires – from, for example, the job specification and the organisation's website and social media pages.

Try to ensure that you have a couple of examples for each competency and that you structure your answers, ideally by using the STAR technique:

S - Situation - Briefly outline the context.

T - Task - Give details of what you hoped to achieve.

A - Action - Describe what you did. Use active verbs.


R - Result - Explain the outcome and anything you have learned as a result


At the end of the interview

In most interview situations, you will have the opportunity to ask questions of your own. It is important that you have some ready, and normally you'd be expected to ask two or three. Try to think of these in advance of the interview and base them upon what you feel you need to know that could help to you decide if you want the job. Typical questions include:


- What would an average day be like?
- How will my performance be measured?
- How would I know that I was doing a good job?
- What opportunities are there for further training and development?
- What challenges does the organisation face in the next five years?
- What are the day-to-day responsibilities of this job?
- What career paths have other graduates followed in the organisation?
- What happens next? When might I hear back from you?

For more information


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See also

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Seminar on preparing for job interviews

Should you have any issues viewing this seminar you can access help [here \(/massey/staffroom/teaching-and-learning/staff-guide-to-stream/mediasite/accessing-content/trouble-shooting-presentation-playback.cfm\)](#). Additionally, to access any links outlined in the seminar please select the link symbol at the bottom of each seminar's screen.

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